Tips for effective communication

In the previous videos, you learned that communication is key to any successful project. As a project manager, you are central to that communication, which is an ongoing process throughout the life cycle of a project. A good project manager must be effective in communicating with all stakeholders and team members through various mediums.

As the project manager, it is important to develop a communication plan for the duration of your project. Good communication helps your project run smoothly, leads to better outcomes, and supports a healthy team culture. You can use these four tips to foster effective communication within your team:

Tips for effective communication
1 Recognize and understand individual differences
2 Brainstorm and craft the appropriate message
3 Deliver your message
4 Obtain feedback and incorporate that feedback going forward
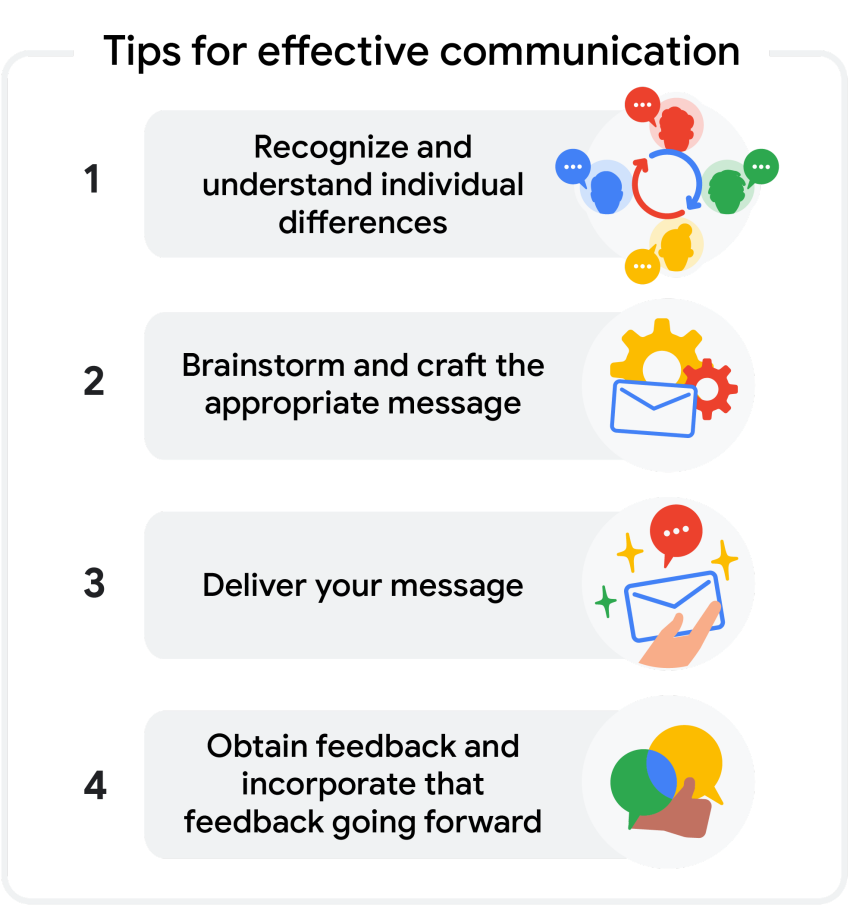
Recognize and understand individual differences

You can encourage open, inclusive communication by:

- Not making assumptions about your audience's backgrounds, identities, or experiences.
- Being mindful of your own biases.
- Using appropriate, professional, and neutral language.
- Including, respecting, and being curious about diverse points of view.

As the project manager, you will undoubtedly work with a diverse group of team members and stakeholders on each project. You will need to understand each team member's background, experiences, perspectives, and biases—as well as your own—to communicate effectively.

Brainstorm and craft the appropriate message

Communicate the right message by thinking about your intended audience. With whom are you communicating? In your communications, always be clear about your reasons for reaching out:

- What channels can your audience use to contact you or the team?
- Are you conveying information?
- Are you asking for input?
- Are you clarifying an issue?
- Are you resolving a problem?

Some team members may require detailed information, while others may only need an overview of the situation. No matter your audience, you should be sure to identify the purpose of the message, state the information or request clearly and concisely, and stay on topic.

Deliver your message

As you craft your message, think about which methods are available and appropriate for communicating with various members of your team, whether that is in person, in a video conference, over the phone, via email, or in a meeting. Choosing the right method is especially important if you have team members or stakeholders in different regions and time zones. Also, be sure to:

- Avoid including any sensitive or potentially private information.
- Assume everyone at the company will receive the communication.

Obtain feedback and incorporate that feedback going forward

Communication doesn't end when you deliver your message, so be sure to follow up with your audience by:

- Checking to make sure your message was clear.
- Asking them for feedback.
- Encouraging open communication.
- Responding to questions quickly.

In this final step, you will obtain feedback from your audience to ensure that your message was received as you intended.

Key takeaways

You now have the steps to communicate effectively as a project manager! You have learned how to foster open, inclusive communication by recognizing and understanding individual differences among your team members. You know how to craft and deliver an appropriate message and the importance of obtaining and addressing feedback. Most importantly, make sure your communications are clear, honest, relevant, and frequent. Following these guidelines will set you up for successful communication throughout your projects.